

DURATIVYATHA—

In the *Kāṭhakaśāṁhitā* 25.1 we read *iṣum vā etā devās samaskurvan yad upasado 'gnir śṛṅgaṁ somaṁ śalyaṁ viṣṇuṁ tejanam / te 'bruvan yo va ojiṣṭhas sa imāṁ visṛjatu / ... na prayāja bhavanti nānuyājāḥ / puro vā ete yajñasya yat prayājānuyājā yat prayājānuyājān kuryāt puro yajñasya kuryād durativyatham syād atikṣṇām iṣum kuryāt*¹. « What are Upasads that these the gods indeed made into an arrow, (they made) Agni the tip, Soma the socket, Viṣṇu the shaft. They said, "who among you is the strongest, let him release this (arrow)" "... There are no Prayāja offerings, nor the Anuyājas. What are the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings they are, indeed, the forts of the sacrifice. If he were to offer the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings he would erect the forts for the sacrifice. (In that case his act of performing the Upasad) would not inflict excessive pain (on the enemies), (for) he would make the arrow (in the form of the Upasads) blunt ».

What is intended to be conveyed in the above passage seems to be that if the sacrificer were to offer the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings that would be tantamount to his erecting forts around the sacrifice. Then the arrow, in the form of the Upasad *iṣṭi*, will first strike against these forts, would become blunt, and consequently inflict very little pain (*durativyatham*) on his enemies.

It is, perhaps, possible to understand the passage this way. However, there appears to be one difficulty. If the above sense was intended, the end portion of the passage would have read *atikṣṇām iṣum kuryād durativyatham syāt*, and not as the text actually stands.

It is therefore tempting to suggest a small emendation and read *durativyadham* « difficult to pierce through » in place of *durativyatham*. The emendation appears appropriate in the context of the shooting of an arrow. If the sacrificer were to offer the Prayāja and the Anuyāja

1. Also *Kaṭiṣṭhalakāṭha*, 38.4.

offerings he would be erecting forts around his sacrifice. The Upasad-arrow will then find it difficult to pierce through this fort. The sacrificer would also make the arrow blunt, and hence ineffective, by making it first strike against the walls of the fort.

Understood this way, the passage yields better sense. In both the interpretations, *durativyatham* and *durativyadham* are considered adjectives. The former would qualify a noun like *karman* « act » supplied², while the latter would qualify the noun *varman* « enclosure », which suggests itself from the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* passage discussed below.

In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* 1.26 (=4.9) we read: *devavarmanā vā etad yad prayājās cānuyājās cāprayājām ananuyājām bhavatiṣvai saṁśītyā apratiśarāya*. This passage is somewhat difficult to understand. Keith translates: « The fore-offerings and the after-offerings are divine armour; (this rite) is without fore-offerings and after-offerings, to sharpen the arrow and to prevent rending ». Haug's translation is much the same except that he renders *apratīśarāya* as « for preventing it from recoiling ».

The above translations are not helpful in understanding the purpose of not performing the fore- and the after-offerings which is expressed with the words *saṁśītyai* and *apratīśarāya*.

Sāyaṇa explains the above passage in the following way: the Upasad iṣṭi should be performed without the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings because these offerings are like an armour and in the present case there is no use of an armour. When the arrow in the form of the Upasads is shot against the enemies, due to the sharpness of the arrow all of them would get killed by a single shot and there would be no one left among them to strike back. Hence an armour becomes unnecessary. But if the sacrificer were to offer the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings it would mean that he was in doubt regarding the sharpness of the arrow and hence, apprehending a counter-attack by the enemy, was providing for protection in the form of the armour. That would not be proper. Hence no Prayāja and Anuyāja offerings are offered in order to demonstrate faith in the sharpness (*saṁśītyai*) of the Upasad-arrow and to set aside the apprehension of injury to one's side at the hands of the enemies (*apratīśarāya*)³.

This is no doubt a good attempt to explain the significance of the two datives *saṁśītyai* and *apratīśarāya*. But the explanation is, in part, strained. In view of the fact that in the *Kāthakasaṁhitā* the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings are likened to *purah* « forts », it would be better to interpret the word *devavarman* in the *Ait.Br.* passage, not as « divine armour » (Keith) or « armour of the gods » (Haug), but as « an enclosure created by the gods, a divine defence ». The *Ait.Br.* passage

2. Cf. the way Sāyaṇa supplies *Upasadākhyam karma* while interpreting the *Ait. Br.* passage discussed below.

3. Śaṅkaraśiṣya merely says *iṣvāḥ śarasya saṁśītyai taikṣṇyāya apratiśarāya apratighātāya*.

would then mean that the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings are not offered because that would be like creating a divine defensive wall around the sacrifice. In that case the Upasad-arrow, when shot, would strike against this wall and would become blunt. To avoid this and to ensure the sharpness (*sarśītyai*) of the arrow, the fore- and the after-offerings are not offered. And once the sharpness of the arrow is ensured, there will be no enemy left to strike back with an arrow (*apraśīsarāya*).

In the *Taittirīya Saṁhitā* also (2.6.1.5) the Prayāja and the Anuyāja offerings are said to constitute the *várma* of the sacrifice and the sacrificer. The fact that in this passage it is further stated that it is on this account that a *varūtha* « a defensive enclosure » is erected taller in the front and shorter at the back shows that by *várma* is meant, not « an armour », but « a defensive wall or enclosure ». The whole passage in the Taitt. Saṁ. reads as: *yát prayājānuyājā iḡyānte vármaivá táđ yajñāya kriyate várma yájamānāya bhrātṛvyābhībhūtyai / tásmād varūtham purāstād várśīyah paścād dhrāśīyah.*